and upgradation of PSUs, creation of new assets, generations of employment and retiring of public debt. Further, the disinvestment of profitable non-strategic PSUs would insulate government finances from the commercial and business risk associated with owning a company and separate the regulatory functions of government from the production and supply of services and products.

Antyodaya Anna Yojana

*237. SHRIMATI SHABANA AZMI:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a massive expansion of the Antyodaya Anna Yojana, which was launched by the Prime Minister two years ago, is being considered by Government;

(b) if so, the existing population under below poverty line category;

(c) whether the scheme has so far been fully implemented to help the families living below poverty; and

(d) if so, the details of expansion programmes being considered in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As per the latest poverty estimates of the Planning Commission (1999-2000), the poverty ratio at the national level is 26.10%.

(c) and (d) The Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) has been under implementation in all the States/UTs to address the requirements of the poorest of the poor. Under the Yojana, 98.69 lakh families have been identified by the State Governments/UTs. The allocation of foodgrains is being made at the scale of 35Kg. of foodgrains per family per month at subsidised prices of Rs. 2 per Kg. for wheat and Rs. 3 per Kg. for rice. The proposed expansion of the AAY has been indicated in the Finance Minister's Budget Speech, 2003-04.